

11 HONoured AT SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME AWARDS 2021

Justin Kor

Green was the theme at this year's Singapore International Maritime Awards (IMA), with two new accolades that recognised maritime companies' efforts to decarbonise and bolster sustainable practices across the industry.

The first was the Sustainability Award, which acknowledged the company that has contributed significantly to the industry's environmental sustainability efforts. The SRS Green Ship Owner Award – given to the ship owner with the largest proportion of ships participating in the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore's (MPA) Green Ship Programme (GSP) – was the other new prize on offer.

In all, Senior Minister of State for Transport Chee Hong Tat presented 11 awards at the hybrid event yesterday, which took place both on-site at Marina Bay Sands and online. It was held in conjunction with the 15th Singapore Maritime Week.

Global marine and offshore company Sembcorp Marine was the winner of the inaugural Sustainability

Award. One of its green initiatives includes the building of liquefied natural gas (LNG) hybrid-powered tugs that will also use electricity. When deployed, these vessels will help cut carbon emissions at the Port of Singapore.

The SRS Green Ship Owner Award went to shipping company BW Group, which has been a key participant of the GSP. The programme aims to encourage ship owners to adopt energy-efficient ship designs.

Its Chairman, Mr Andreas Sohlen-Pao, also clinched the International Maritime Centre (Individual) Award, which recognises an outstanding individual who has contributed towards Singapore's development as a premier maritime hub.

Besides heading BW Group, he also holds a number of roles in various organisations and committees, such as co-chairing the International Advisory Panel on Maritime Decarbonisation – a group that recommends policies and actions to help the industry meet its global decarbonisation goals. ■

The Award Winners

International Maritime Centre Award (Corporate)
Eastern Pacific Shipping

International Maritime Centre Award (Individual)
Mr Andreas Sohlen-Pao

Excellence in Manpower Training and Development Award
PSA International

Outstanding Maritime R&D and Technology Award
Shipsfocus Services

Sustainability Award
Sembcorp Marine

Bunker Award
V-Bunkers Tankers

Maritime Service Provider Award
Synergy Marine

SRS Ship Owner of the Year Award
AET Tankers

SRS Green Ship of the Year Award
Saga Dawn, Saga LNG Shipping
Special Mention: Takaroa Sun, NYK Bulkship (Asia)

SRS Green Ship Owner Award
BW Group

EASTERN PACIFIC SHIPPING: Winner of the International Maritime Centre (Corporate) Award 2021

Marcus Wong

The past few years had been a busy period for the maritime industry. Apart from having to manage the usual ups and downs of the market cycle, many companies have had to adapt to technological disruption, decarbonisation rules and, of course, the fallout from COVID-19.

But instead of getting distracted by these events, Eastern Pacific Shipping (EPS) has kept its sights firmly on its long-term objective of greening the seas.

Last year, it set out a commitment towards industry-wide decarbonisation as part of its Environmental, Social and Governance policy. Earlier this year, it doubled down on its pledge by announcing that it managed to surpass its CO2 reduction target two years ahead of schedule, the result of its concerted effort to move its fleet towards green-technology and cleaner fuels.

"While there is no perfect solution, the company remains committed to continue its transition towards using cleaner energy sources available today to lower its carbon emissions," said EPS' Chief Executive Officer Cyril Ducau.

"As a leading tonnage provider managing over 17 million DWT, EPS has a responsibility to implement emission lowering solutions available today while simultaneously developing solutions for tomorrow. This is in line with Maritime Singapore's decarbonisation agenda guided by the targets of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to reduce total annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from international shipping by at least 50 per cent by 2050."

Apart from decarbonisation, he believes that there are multiple challenges the industry must face, and these can only be met with a combination of innovation, technology and talent.

In 2019, the company launched the Eastern Pacific Accelerator in partnership with accelerator platform Techstars. The goal: cultivate a new generation of startups and entrepreneurs that can reshape the maritime industry by bringing new solutions to longstanding challenges.

So far, 18 startups have received funding and mentorship to pursue a range of different solutions from artificial intelligence, virtual reality and drones. About half of them are based in Singapore.

The company is also focusing its efforts to tackle the talent crunch that the industry is facing, said Mr Ducau.

"The most significant challenge in achieving this growth is attracting talent to pursue a career in maritime business, marine engineering, or a life at sea as a seafarer," he said.

The company, headquartered in Singapore, partnered Idan & Batia Ofer Family Foundation to launch an annual S\$200,000 scholarship fund for an initial period of three years. It will be awarded in cooperation with the Singapore Maritime Founda-



tion's MaritimeONE scholarship programme, and aims to award 10 full and mid-term programme scholarships a year.

These initiatives have helped bolster the reputation of Singapore as an international maritime centre, something that Mr Ducau is happy to do.

"Much of our success can be attributed to being headquartered in Singapore and we are committed to supporting Maritime Singapore, which represents the entire ecosystem of the maritime industry on a global stage," he said.

"It is essential that Singapore remains relevant as a global maritime hub as it is a maritime gateway to key Asian markets and the world." ■